

Claims: Please cancel claims 2 to 6, 11, 12, 15, and 19, amend claims 1, 13, 14, 16, 17, and 18, and add claim 20 as follows:

1. (currently amended) A method for treating glucomannan glucomannan in a fine konjac powder or flour with an average particle size of less than about 160 microns comprising:
 - (a) contacting the fine konjac powder or flour with an organic alcohol solution of at least about 30 percent by volume alcohol; and
 - (b) adding to that mixture a sodium or calcium salt solution such that a gel membrane forms at the surface of the particles by reaction with the glucomannan the second filtered solids are dried to form a gel coated powder having substantially all its particles covered in separate gel coats the gel coated powder contacts a liquid comprising substantial amounts of liquid water;
 - (c) the mixture of step (b) is filtered to remove liquid from the particles to form a first filtered solids,
 - (d) the first filtered solids are contacted with a concentrated organic alcohol solution to consolidate the gel membrane,
 - (e) the mixture is filtered to remove liquid from the particles to form a second filtered solids,
 - (f) the second filtered solids are dried to form a gel coated powder having substantially all its particles covered in separate gel coats,
 - (g) the gel coated powder contacts a liquid comprising substantial amounts of water, and
 - (h) the water is prevented from being absorbed by the glucomannan by the gel coats for more than about 2 minutes.
2. to 5. (canceled)
6. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the organic alcohol is an ethanol solution less than or equal to about 60 percent by volume of ethanol.
7. (original) The method of claim 6 wherein the mixture of step (a) is stirred to wet substantially all the fine konjac powder or flour and is maintained thereafter in an undisturbed state for at least three minutes.

8. (original) The method of claim 6 wherein the mixture of step (a) is stirred to wet substantially all the konjac flour and is maintained thereafter in an undisturbed state for less than or equal to ten minutes.
9. (original) The method of claim 6 wherein the mixture of step (b) is stirred and is maintained thereafter in an undisturbed state for at least ten minutes.
10. (original) The method of claim 6 wherein the mixture of step (b) is stirred and is maintained thereafter in an undisturbed state for less than or equal to 30 minutes.
11. (canceled)
12. (canceled)
13. (currently amended) The method of claim 12 1 wherein the liquid water is a beverage or part of a beverage and is ingested by a human user with the gel coat powder before substantial swelling of the glucomannan occurs.
14. (currently amended) The method of claim 12 1 wherein the liquid water is part of a beverage with a temperature above about 100 degrees F and is ingested by a human user with the gel coat powder before substantial swelling of the glucomannan occurs within five to ten minutes from the time of first contact of the beverage water.
15. (canceled)
16. (currently amended) The method of claim 15 1 wherein the gel coated powder contacts a liquid comprising small amounts of water where the liquid water is part of a meat product and is ingested by a human user with the gel coat powder before substantial swelling of the glucomannan occurs within five to ten minutes from the time of first contact of the meat product water.
17. (currently amended) The method of claim 15 1 wherein the gel coated powder contacts a liquid comprising small amounts of water and the liquid water is part of a dairy product and is ingested by a human user with the gel coat powder before substantial swelling of the glucomannan occurs within five to ten minutes from the time of first contact of the dairy product water.
18. (currently amended) The method of claim 15 1 wherein the gel coated powder contacts a liquid comprising small amounts of water and the liquid water is part of a flour product and is ingested by a human user with the gel coat powder before

substantial swelling of the glucomannan occurs within five to ten minutes from the time of first contact of the flour product water.

19. (canceled)
20. (new) A method for treating glucomannan in a fine konjac powder or flour with an average particle size of less than about 160 microns comprising:
 - (a) contacting the fine konjac powder or flour with an organic alcohol solution of at least about 30 percent by volume alcohol;
 - (b) adding to that mixture a sodium or calcium salt solution such that a gel membrane forms at the surface of the particles by reaction with the glucomannan the second filtered solids are dried to form a gel coated powder having substantially all its particles covered in separate gel coats the gel coated powder contacts a liquid comprising substantial amounts of liquid water;
 - (c) the mixture of step (b) is filtered to remove liquid from the particles to form a first filtered solids,
 - (d) the first filtered solids are contacted with an organic alcohol solution of with a concentration of ninety-five percent or more at only to consolidate the gel membrane so that it is rendered substantially impenetrable by water after filtering and drying.